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Atari Online News, Etc.  
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->From the Editor's Keyboard  
"~~~~~"

"Saying it like it is!"

Short work weeks due to holidays are great, aren't they?! Happy 4th of July to everyone - at least to those of you in the States. We've finally had a good week of weather for a change! Yes, it's been hot, and humid, but after the Spring (or lack thereof) that we had, this has been a great week.

My truck debacle seems to be winding down. The "new" transmission has apparently broken itself in and works much better than it did a week ago. I also got the lawn tractor running finally, last weekend. The battery needed a full night of charging, the sparkplug replaced, and some clean gas. It did a pretty nice job on the lawn once I was able to get the right adjustments made. It certainly cut down on the time I spend mowing my lawn! The only down side is that the tractor is about 2 inches too wide and won't fit through my gate to get to the front yard!

In our neighborhood, we'll be celebrating the 4th with a block party - a now annual event. By the time you read this, the party should be starting to wind down. Hopefully I'll be back inside at a reasonable hour to get this week's issue out on the streets!

In the meantime, I'll let you all get to the rest of this issue, and resume your holiday festivities. I know that I plan to have the barbecue grill going a lot, and the cold beer flowing! Hey, that's what long holiday weekends are all about, right!

Until next time...

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#### CT60 Falcon Accelerator Shipping

The long awaited CT60 Falcon accelerator from Czuba-tech is finally shipping to developers. Some stability issues are still being resolved, but performance is looking very exciting - 15 to 20 times faster than a standard falcon, and 4-5 times faster than the best existing accelerators (CT2, Afterburner 040)

It is even outperforming the Hades060 in some tests!

See this site for some benchmarks:

<http://perso.wanadoo.fr/didierm/ct60/benchs.htm>

There are other benchmarks on the czuba-tech site

The CT60 allows a Falcon to run a Motorola MC/EC/LC68060 @ 66mhz, with the bus running at 16, 20, or 25mhz. The DSP and Videl (graphics chip) can be run at 40 or 50mhz

<http://www.czuba-tech.com/>

#### Atari Roots on the Web

The folks at [atariarchives.org](http://atariarchives.org) are thrilled to announce that the full text of Atari Roots is now available on the Web.

Published in 1984, Atari Roots is perhaps the best guide to Atari 8-bit assembly language ever written. The site includes the full text of the book, plus downloadable software and source code, at:

<http://www.atariarchives.org/roots/>

This is the 16th classic computing book to be made available at [atariarchives.org](http://atariarchives.org).

#### MJJ Prod Slideshow

MJJ Prod have release their new Slideshow for ST and Falcon.

It's a compilation of (almost) never seen pictures from C-Rem, Niko and Wilfried plus a lot of hidden screens.

<http://perso.wanadoo.fr/mjjprod/>

=~==~==

PEOPLE ARE TALKING  
compiled by Joe Mirando  
[joe@atarinews.org](mailto:joe@atarinews.org)

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. First of all, let me wish all of my countrymen (pardon the obvious gender bias) a happy Fourth of July. I hope that you had sense enough to act responsibly during the holiday weekend, and that you took a moment to remember what it's all about.

I happened to find myself reading an article about my favorite character from this country's struggle for independence... Benjamin Franklin. Now, there are those who will tell you that Franklin was a raucous, lecherous womanizer who was more of what we'd call a communist today than a founding father of a democracy, and usually did not believe in what he claimed to believe in enough to follow it through without giving in to the opposition.

Well, It's possible that they're correct. He did, after all, father a child out of wedlock, enjoy all sorts of things that gave his contemporaries fits, and worst of all, he published a newspaper that routinely printed "untruths" and bucked the establishment. The illegitimate child he took responsibility for, believed that adversity can breed strength, and realized that no tyranny could stand against a free and open press that was allowed to publish any and all beliefs and ideas.

While it's true that Franklin often published parodies and other pieces that poked fun at the establishment, he also published pieces by others who disagreed with his own personal opinion.

Now stay with me... I'll get around to the point in a paragraph or two. I just want to "talk up" Franklin for another paragraph or two.

The fact is that Franklin had a firm belief in the principals of tolerance, compromise, hard work, and humility. Even if he did not fully attain some of these lofty virtues, he widely extolled them to others and even imbued the U.S. Constitution with them. Indeed, if it weren't for Franklin, the Constitution would probably have looked very different... if it had ever come into being.

Aside from his political influence (both in the colonies and in France), he was an inventor, a businessman, and even a fund raiser. He's the major reason that Philadelphia is known as The City of Brotherly Love, since he was quite active in getting religious factions to work together for the common good. He was instrumental in the building of a place of worship that was open to all denominations. Franklin wrote of it: "Even if the Mufti of Constantinople were to send a missionary to preach Mohammedanism to us, he would find a pulpit at his service."

But the whole reason I'm mentioning this to you is that he was instrumental in creating the first "lending libraries". What we now call "Public Libraries" owe their existence in large part to Franklin.

Libraries are wonderful things. You can go and read a book that you don't own and not feel that you are stealing something. If you happen to be a citizen of the particular township or city that you find yourself in, you can take the book home for no more than the promise to return it. Amazing in its time.

THIS is the point I've been waiting for. Lending. There are those today who use this analogy to defend file sharing. Unfortunately, it usually doesn't hold up.

In a library you can read a book that you don't own and not feel like you're stealing knowledge or "getting away" with anything. In a nutshell, that's because the book has been bought and paid for. The fact that it's being shared does not diminish its worth because it's going to be returned to its owner (the library).

As its done today, file sharing is different. You don't glean knowledge,

enlightenment, if you will, and then return it to its rightful owner. You get an unauthorized copy from someone who either got it from someone else, or made it themselves.

So what's wrong with that? Reproductions of famous paintings are available in every museum gift shop. The difference is that the reproduction of a painting is just that... a reproduction. A reproduction of a program or movie is different. It's of no less value than the original because it isn't actually a reproduction... it's functionally the same as the original. By creating what is basically another original, you infringe on the owner's rights.

I can imagine Franklin sitting in a local drinking establishment and over a flagon (or two) of ale, telling a joke about the new serving girl or explaining his views on the virtues "older women". But I cannot for the life of me see Benjamin Franklin countenancing file sharing. Can you?

Now let's get to the news, hints, tips, and info available every week on the UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup  
=====

George Nakos asks about the possibility of encoding/decoding OGG audio files on a 68000:

"I have been pondering on the matter of porting the Ogg Vorbis replaying routine to 68000. I have downloaded all the sources from xiph.org, including a player which uses integers only, but I have some problems.

Mainly, the integer only routine is 64-bit only and I can't modify anything since my C knowledge is quite bad. On the other hand, I have quite some skill in 68000 assembly.

Now, a weird thought crept into my mind one night. Why not compile the Ogg sources on a standard Atari Compiler, and then reverse engineer the executable to see what happens? I'm not talking about real-time performance here, just loading and unpacking the file into memory. But my abysmal C knowledge (see above) restricts me from doing that.

Hence this post. Is anybody out there willing to assist me? All that he needs to do (which is indeed a Herculean task for me) is to modify the sources a bit so that they will do what I described above (just load/unpack file), and then send me the executable (the modified sources would be nice too), so I can reverse engineer it and code it a bit better (if possible).

Any help would be appreciated. (please note that the minimum target machine is a standard 4mb ste - it will be of course upwards compatible)."

Mark Duckworth tells George:

"Using more advanced DSP's like 563xx and such would you be able to do it on those? I would imagine that those have more on chip memory available inside the DSP.

You're asking for an awful lot. I hope you don't expect real-time decoding and playing without specialized hardware as a typical 68000 processor isn't enough. Even a 68030 just isn't fast enough hence the Falcon must use DSP support. But actually AFAIK there is no OGG vorbis

DSP support yet in Aniplayer so mp3 is the way to go for real time playback on the Falcon. The 68060 however I suspect will not even burp at playing back an MP3/vorbis file.

If you simply just want to decode and don't care how long it takes, Kenneth's suggestion of Aniplayer is the way to go and I'm sure the vorbis stuff could be compiled for 68000."

Kenneth Medin points out:

"Aniplayer at <http://aniplay.atari.org/> will decode (and encode) Ogg files on a 68020. Maybe you could go on from there."

Peter West tells Kenneth:

"I recently tried to play an Ogg file from the last ST Computer CD in Aniplayer, but it could not be started - the dialog box came up OK but clicking on the play arrow did nothing at all! Any ideas? his is on a Falcon and MagiC 6.01, with VORBIS.SLB and VORB\_ENC.SLB in the MAGIC\XTENSION folder."

James Haslam asks for help with a CAB problem:

"Can someone help me with Cab 2.7c?

Many sites these days use cookies. I have got them enabled in Cab, currently using the "Always Accept" selection.

However many sites complain that cookies aren't being accepted. I know that these do work on some sites though!

Why?

Is there nothing else I can do?

I am using Sting v1.26 for TCP/IP and Dan Ackerman's CAB OVL v1.4401, under MagiC v6.01 on my Falcon030."

Pascal Ricard tells James:

"Sometimes Dan's OVL is better, sometimes it's Oliver's one. But some sites send/check cookies with JavaScript and you cannot do anything in this case with Cab. Even if JavaScript is not used, Dan's and Oliver's OVLs do not always cope with cookies."

Raoul Teulings asks for info on GEMDOS errors:

"Can somebody help me with a recurring problem: I still get Gemdos errors memory and sometimes stack overflow messages when i go to the menu bar. Is it something between the Nova driver and Jinnee? It happens the most frequent times working in Papyrus when i try to save or load. I cancelled the working of Boxkite, threw Stewart out of my system but still it's happening. It is kinda frightening because if i do not save very regularly large portions of new written texts are lost...."

Derryck Croker tells Raoul:

"The only way you're going to be able to sort this out is by disabling progs and accs one by one I'm afraid.

BTW is it only when you visit the menu bar that you get the problem, or do you still get crashes if you use the "Save as" keyboard shortcut? That might help you narrow the cause down, maybe."

Raoul tells Derryck:

"Thanks for the help. Well, it has also to do with the order of programs in the auto folder i guess...Because sometimes a strange and very little square field emerges on the screen and causes the same gemdos error. AFAIK that has to do with the Nova driver and i placed it on another spot in the auto folder; maybe that that'll help..."

Has Trapper.prg to do with it? That's the last proggie i installed.

Most of the time it does, strangely not when i use the normal (control-S) save option...I think that Boxkite performs a great deal to this problem but i am not sure. It is hard to get rid of it 'cause it is very convenient compared to the standard MagiC file selector. I'll keep going on with my 'try and error' quest..."

Derryck asks Raoul:

"Hmm, have you thought about using some other file selector such as Freedom?

With that one you can disable it on a per-program basis.

Perhaps there's something about the way that Boxkite draws itself on screen that your graphics card driver doesn't like."

Peter Slegg asks about the THING desktop:

"A while ago I installed a 20Gb hard disk in my Milan alongside the 2Gb.

I had problems using it as a boot drive so I ordered the latest version of HD Driver and I now have Vn 8.11

I have partitioned it as follows:

```
H : BGM : 381.9
I : BGM : 954.6
J : BGM : 954.6
K : BGM : 1909.3
L : F32 : 5537
M : F32 : 5537
N : LNX : 3818.6
```

Using Mint/NAES/Thing I can access the partitions ok but if I open a window on I, J or K, select all and do Ctrl-I for Info then I get an error from Thing saying "block\_IO.c abort, no free unit in cache! (cache to small?)"

I started with 2Gb partitions but I keep making them smaller but keep getting the error message. I suspect that the error will only disappear when I get to 500Mb (the same as D and E)

I don't think it is a HD Driver error, is this a known bug in Thing ?"

Adam Klobukowski tells Peter:



four new categories depending on where the action falls between slapstick caricature and more realistic portrayals of injury and death.

The new, more detailed ratings system comes as the video game industry is fighting off attempts by some local governments to ban the sale of violent games to minors.

The ESRB said that as of Sept. 15, it will require new, more descriptive rating information on the backs of game boxes. Also as of that date, the "Mature" and "Adults Only" will be changed to show the minimum recommended ages for each of those categories.

The ESRB said its "cartoon violence" label will apply to games in which violent acts happen to animated characters, while "fantasy violence" will apply in cases in which a scenario clearly distinguishable from reality.

The ESRB defines "intense violence" as bloody, gory and realistic-looking depictions of human injury or death, while "sexual violence" covers the depiction of rape.

Patricia Vance, the head of the ESRB, told Reuters that a major goal of the revisions was to keep the rating system current with the aging gaming population.

"I think certainly one of our goals is to stay current," Vance said, as the age of the average gamer grows from the teens to the late 20s. "The system has to grow with that as well."

Vance also said she hoped local governments would not use the new ratings classifications to pursue further legislation.

"We certainly hope it won't come to that," she said.

The Interactive Digital Software Association, the industry trade group that started the ESRB, recently won a ruling in federal appellate court striking down a St. Louis ordinance that would have banned the sale or rental of violent games to minors.

The IDSA is also seeking an injunction against the enforcement of a Washington law that would bar the sale of games depicting violence against police officers to minors.

#### Harry Potter Video Game Being Planned

A Harry Potter game for Playstation2, Xbox and the Nintendo GameCube will go on sale later this year, software developer Warthog said Friday.

The company, based in Manchester, has signed a deal with games software publisher Electronic Arts to develop the game, called "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone," and based on J.K. Rowling's first adventure about the young wizard.

Featuring new 3D graphics, it takes the player on a journey to unravel the mystery of the philosopher's stone (or sorcerer's stone, as it was described in U.S. editions of the best-selling book).

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A-ONE's Headline News  
The Latest in Computer Technology News  
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Bill Would Require Hacked-Account Alert

Embarrassed businesses and government agencies would have to notify consumers under a proposed law if hackers break into computers and steal some types of personal information, including Social Security numbers, driver's license numbers and credit card information.

The bill, introduced by Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., a senior member on the Judiciary Committee, follows a similar California law with slightly tougher provisions that takes effect next week.

Both Feinstein's proposal and the new California law contrast with efforts by the Bush administration to keep from the public details about major computer crimes to encourage hacking victims to notify the FBI and other government investigators. The FBI director and some top U.S. prosecutors assured technology executives just months ago they will increasingly work to keep secret the names of companies that become victims to major hacking crimes.

"That's our preferred approach. We didn't ask for this legislation," said Shannon Kellogg, director of information security policy at the Business Software Alliance. "But if you're going to look at legislation in this area, then it needs to be looked at in a national way."

The proposed federal law would not affect the new California law, the first of its kind in the nation. But it would prevent other states from passing similar statutes.

Unlike California's new law, the federal law would not allow consumers to sue companies for failing to notify them and it gives companies more flexibility in how they make such announcements.

Still, consumer groups and others praised the effort.

"It's a really important step forward," said Chris Hoofnagle, deputy counsel at the Washington-based Electronic Privacy Information Center. "Individuals do not have this right to notice now."

Feinstein's bill would require companies or government agencies to notify customers "without unreasonable delay" if they discover hackers stole unencrypted lists of account information stored on their computers, unless police order them not to disclose it.

Companies or agencies could send written letters or e-mails to their consumers. If the hacking affects more than 500,000 customers or would cost a company more than \$250,000 to notify customers, victim companies could report details about it with a "conspicuous posting" on their Web site or notify major media organizations.

The California law includes a similar provision for wide-scale hacking but requires victims in those cases to publish details on their Web sites and notify media organizations.

Companies or agencies that fail to comply could be fined under the bill up to \$5,000 per violation, or up to \$25,000 each day. It assigns responsibility for enforcing the law on state attorneys general and requires states to notify the Justice Department before filing a complaint.

The bill also includes an important exemption for businesses such as credit-card companies that employ security programs that block unauthorized transactions before they're charged to customers and that already notify customers of fraudulent transactions.

### Politicians Call for Global War on E-Mail Spam

Politicians and industry officials on Tuesday called for new global laws to block the flow of spam, unsolicited e-mails that clog in-boxes and threaten to destabilize the world's computer networks. Lawmakers in Europe, the U.S. and Australia are in the process of drafting laws that would criminalize the delivery of unwanted bulk e-mails.

But officials warn that without international cooperation, spammers will continue to send mass e-mails including spurious appeals for cash and offers ranging from university diplomas to pornography, septic tanks and low-interest mortgages.

"Spam is not just a UK or European problem," said UK E-commerce Minister Stephen Timms in making the opening address at a summit on spam.

"Most spam comes from outside. A lot of it comes from the U.S. Hopefully, it's possible for us to come up with an EU-US solution from our discussions today," he said.

Lawmakers, consumer advocates and Internet industry officials gathered for the latest in a string of many scheduled discussions on harmonizing international laws to cut back on spam, which now accounts for nearly half of all global e-mail circulating across the Internet. Spam has become a hot-button issue for politicians and business officials, who worry that unless it's criminalized, spamming could become an increasingly costly nuisance for companies and individuals.

Lawmakers are united in the belief that new laws should act as a deterrent to spammers but that they should not eliminate legitimate e-mail marketing messages altogether.

But there exists fundamental disagreements over how this can be accomplished. The biggest gulf exists over whether a marketer should get a computer user's permission beforehand.

For example, the European Union's data protection directive requires all e-mail senders, whether legitimate marketers or spammers, to get the prior consent of the user.

This so-called "opt-in" route would broadly define spamming activities as any email that arrives without a user's permission, which EU officials say

is an effective restraint.

But current U.S. proposals carries a more advertiser-friendly "opt-out" mechanism.

"The U.S. law is going to be the key," said Steve Linford, founder of the UK-based Spamhaus Project, a non-profit group that tracks and identifies the world's biggest spammers. "Spammers are cheering the opt-out legislation. It legalizes the status quo."

Linford called America "the spam capital of the world." Some 140 individuals, most of whom are U.S.-based, are responsible for roughly 90 percent of the world's spam.

In noting the U.S.'s reputation as the birthplace of spamming, Internet officials across the globe have begun to question whether U.S. laws will cut down the flow of spam that originates within its borders.

While the debate over the effectiveness of "opt-in" verses "opt-out" grows, others point out that legislation can only go so far.

"New laws won't stop spam. It will act as a deterrent," said Enrique Salem, chief executive officer of Brightmail, a U.S.-based spam filter software firm. "A global technical solution is required. The law can only reach so far."

#### Court Rules Against Intel in Spam Case

The California Supreme Court on Monday ruled spammers cannot be sued under state law for property trespass for just sending e-mail - a setback for Intel Corp. - which had sued a former engineer for sending e-mails to up to 35,000 company workers.

The 4-3 ruling reversed a lower court order prohibiting former Intel engineer Ken Hamidi from sending e-mails critical of Intel to thousands of its employees.

Intel claimed the e-mails had trespassed on its private network and had harmed the company by reducing worker productivity.

But the California Supreme Court found that Intel's computer system had not been damaged as a result of the e-mails and, therefore, there was no trespass.

The court declined to expand state common law covering property trespass to apply to e-mail whose contents may be objectionable, but which is otherwise harmless.

"Creating an absolute property right to exclude undesired communications from one's e-mail and Web servers might help force spammers to internalize the costs they impose on ISPs (Internet service providers) and their customers," the court wrote.

"But such a property rule might also create substantial new costs, to e-mail and e-commerce users and to society generally, in lost ease and openness of communication and in lost network benefits," the opinion continued. "In light of the unresolved controversy, we would be acting

rashly to adopt a rule treating computer servers as real property for purposes of trespass law."

Ken Olson, a San Francisco lawyer for Hamidi, said that means that if someone wants to bring a trespass lawsuit there needs to be proof that the computer system was damaged.

The ruling comes amid a larger battle to curtail spam with Microsoft Corp. and other ISPs suing spammers and federal lawmakers introducing strong anti-spam legislation. The California state Senate has approved a bill that would allow people to sue spammers.

Between 1996 and 1998 Hamidi sent six e-mails to as many as 35,000 Intel workers complaining about Intel's employment practices after he was fired following a disability leave.

Hamidi said he did not breach Intel's computer system and removed people from the list if they requested it.

Intel filed a lawsuit against Hamidi and a Sacramento Superior court issued a summary judgment ordering him to stop sending the e-mails. Hamidi appealed, a divided appeals court affirmed the lower court decision, and he appealed to the state's highest court.

In ruling against Intel, the California Supreme Court said the situation would be similar to someone claiming a mailbox was harmed after reading an unpleasant letter or the telephone was harmed after receiving an intrusive phone call.

Hamidi's lawyers had argued that preventing him from sending the e-mails had violated his rights to free speech, a point on which the state Supreme Court did not specifically rule.

"We're studying the opinion to assess our options as to what we can do in the event Hamidi resumes his spamming of Intel," said Intel spokesman Chuck Mulloy.

Hamidi, who now works as a compliance officer for the California Franchise Tax Board, said he will continue sending e-mails to Intel workers, possibly weekly, to discuss Intel's labor practices.

"For five years I have been muzzled," he said in an interview. "I'm amazingly excited. I cannot describe the feeling."

#### Spam Operation to Repay Customers

An e-mail spam operation that promised people cash for stuffing envelopes at home will refund more than \$200,000 to settle federal charges that it deceived consumers, regulators said Wednesday.

The Federal Trade Commission had accused the operation of using spam to sell consumers letters and pre-stamped, pre-addressed envelopes for a \$40 fee. The operation told consumers they would earn \$2 for every envelope stuffed, but people who paid the fee did not receive envelopes.

Consumers who paid for the business opportunity with Stuffingforcash.com Inc., Sound Publications Inc. or Mailmax Inc., but did not receive the

promised supplies or income, can file for a refund online by using a complaint form at [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov), the FTC said. Consumers will be required to provide proof they were victims.

In July 2002, a court shut down the Stuffingforcash.com Web sites at the request of the FTC.

About \$40,000 has already been returned to consumers, the FTC said.

The FTC said the man behind the operation, Nelson Barrero, pleaded guilty in May to two criminal counts of wire fraud and faces up to 5 years in prison. A sentencing hearing is scheduled for Sept. 5 in East St. Louis, Ill.

Charles Jaffee, an attorney for the companies in the FTC civil case, said he had no immediate comment on the settlement.

### Court Says Aimster Must Stay Offline

Aimster, the online service being sued by major record labels for allowing its users to copy songs for free, must remain shut down until it can prove its users do more than illegally trade copyrighted material, a U.S. appeals court ruled on Monday.

The ruling by the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago further muddies the legal waters surrounding Aimster and other "peer-to-peer" song-swap services that recording companies blame for a sharp decline in CD sales.

Various courts have shut down Aimster, Napster, and other online music file sharing services, agreeing with the recording industry's argument that they are responsible for massive copyright infringement over their networks.

But a U.S. judge in Los Angeles ruled in April that the Grokster and Morpheus services should not be shut down because they do not control what is traded over their networks, much as videocassette makers should not be held liable if their users tape copyrighted shows.

Judge Richard Posner of the Seventh Circuit said that though there were merits to both arguments, Aimster could likely be held responsible for infringing activity because its tutorials encouraged users to download copyrighted songs.

"The evidence that we have summarized does not exclude the possibility of substantial noninfringing uses of the Aimster system, but the evidence is sufficient ... to shift the burden of production to Aimster to demonstrate that its service has substantial noninfringing uses," Posner wrote for the three-judge panel that heard the appeal.

Aimster would do better if it could prove that users traded music that was not copyrighted, or used the service to access copies of music they already own, he wrote.

Aimster founder Johnny Deep said that the ruling would make it easier for him to prove that his service had substantial legitimate uses when a full trial takes place. The courts so far have only ruled on the question of whether Aimster should be shut down during the trial.

"I'm shut down, fine, whatever," Deep said. "I want to get to trial. They can't drag this on forever."

A recording-industry trade group said the ruling would help its case against Grokster and Morpheus, which is currently on appeal, as well as its planned lawsuits against individuals who trade copyrighted songs online.

"A peer-to-peer service is not off the hook simply because it claims there may be legitimate users of its network," said Cary Sherman, president of the Recording Industry Association of America. "When these types of services exist primarily as a vehicle for copyright infringement, they have an obligation to try and reduce the illegal activity occurring on their networks."

#### U.S. Unsatisfied with Microsoft Licenses

The U.S. Justice Department told a federal judge on Thursday that Microsoft Corp. still hasn't fully complied with a key provision in its landmark antitrust settlement with the government.

In a report to the judge, attorneys with the department said they "remain concerned" about the price Microsoft plans to charge competitors to view the inner workings of the Windows program, a requirement under the antitrust settlement.

The department is still not satisfied with the royalty structure and rates Microsoft has proposed to charge for access to computer code needed to make server software function properly with the Windows operating system.

The licensing terms could be important to companies such as Sun Microsystems Inc. that are battling Microsoft in the market for software that run servers, the powerful machines that manage computer networks.

Thursday's report to U.S. District Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly was aimed at keeping the judge updated on Microsoft's compliance with the settlement.

As part of the settlement, Microsoft had promised to license the code, or protocols, on "reasonable and non-discriminatory" terms.

However, Microsoft rivals, who opposed the settlement, have since complained to the department that the licensing terms are anything but reasonable.

In April, under pressure from the department, Microsoft said it had agreed to make it cheaper and easier for competitors to license the code.

Microsoft spokesman Jim Desler said on Thursday that the company has complied with the settlement, but "is open to considering additional feedback from government and industry."

"We've worked together and made some initial changes to this complex and unprecedented program and we will continue to work together," Desler said.

The Justice Department told the judge that complaints about the license terms made up the majority of the 18 "substantive" complaints about Microsoft compliance.

The department is particularly concerned that competitors have access to the server protocols because the provision is - in the judge's words - the most "forward-looking" part of the settlement, which is designed to restore competition.

The department quoted further from Kollar-Kotelly's opinion in the case, saying the settlement could end up "prematurely obsolete" without licensing the code under reasonable terms.

The Justice Department agreed to the settlement in November 2001, saying the business restrictions in it would restore competition to the software business and prevent Microsoft from engaging in anti-competitive tactics.

The settlement, endorsed a year later by Kollar-Kotelly, resolved findings that the company abused its monopoly in personal computer operating systems.

Ken Wasch, head of the Software & Information Industry Association, said problems with the license terms are no surprise .

Of the four companies that have agreed to license the server protocols, Wasch said, none compete directly with Microsoft.

"The disclosure of these protocols is a critical part of what the government claims it won from Microsoft in the settlement, and now we find that that critical part of the settlement is not in practice providing any relief whatsoever to the industry," Wasch said.

Other terms of the settlement gave computer makers greater freedom to feature non-Microsoft software, allowing them to hide some Microsoft icons on the Windows desktop.

#### Web Site Warning: Defacement Contest Sunday

Crackers and low-level online vandals are planning some post-Independence Day fireworks this weekend with a so-called Web site defacement challenge. The goal is for participants to deface as many sites as possible within the six-hour time limit.

Some government organizations have issued warnings to their constituent agencies, cautioning them about the contest and urging them to ensure that their Web servers are secured. The New York State Office of Cyber Security and Critical Infrastructure Coordination implored state agencies to take simple steps such as changing default passwords, removing unused sample applications from production servers and backing up their Web servers.

Internet Security Systems Inc. on Wednesday sent out a bulletin about the contest that said the company's X-Force research team has seen increased levels of reconnaissance-type scans on Web servers, presumably from participants scouting vulnerable servers for the contest. The competition is set to begin Sunday, and the winner will be the first person or team to deface 6,000 sites, or whoever has defaced the most sites within the time limit if no one reaches 6,000.

A further list of rules is laid out on a rudimentary Web site that advertises the contest in miserable, sometimes indecipherable English.

There is also a version of the site in Portuguese, which might indicate the organizers of the event are members of the extremely active Brazilian hacking scene.

Participants will be awarded points based on the operating system running on the Web servers they deface. Windows machines get just one point, while the less common HP-UX and Macintosh systems are awarded the maximum of five points.

These kinds of contests among crackers are not uncommon, but the potentially huge scope and public advertisement of the defacement challenge make it somewhat unusual.

#### New Software Could Help Police Crack Murder Cases

Scientists in Scotland have developed new software which could soon be helping police investigate suspicious deaths.

The program examines evidence and suggests less obvious lines of inquiry that detectives might have overlooked, New Scientist magazine said on Wednesday.

"It takes an overview of all the available evidence and then speculates on what might have happened," said one of its developers, Jeroen Keppens, at Edinburgh's Joseph Bell Center for Forensic Statistics and Legal Reasoning.

Keppens said detectives tended to formulate one hypothesis and tried to confirm it. This encouraged them to ask witnesses leading questions rather than ones that examined all possibilities.

The software uses a large database of different causes of death and the evidence that points to them. Investigators enter the evidence they have and the software says how it might be linked. It suggests what might have happened and calculates how likely each scenario is.

The system considers all possibilities rather than reaching its own conclusion. If, for example, the victim was an old man and an alcoholic, it will still consider murder as a cause of death.

David Holmes, director of Manchester Metropolitan University's Forensic Research Group, told the magazine police should probably be using a system like the prototype but did express doubts.

"What worries me is the sheer volume of information you'd be expected to put in," he said.

The prototype will not be ready to handle real cases for about two years.

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